

# **GREETINGS FROM COOLIDGE SCHOOL**

*August 26, 2014*

[www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools/coolidge](http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools/coolidge)

Dear Families,

Happy New Year! Thank you for sending your children to school ready and rested. Teachers have been hard at work over these past few weeks preparing classrooms to become bright, inviting, and organized learning spaces. It's so nice to finally see these spaces in use.

At Coolidge we pride ourselves on being a warm and welcoming community. This sense of collaboration starts with the adults. During this first six weeks you should also notice your child building connections with other students. Staff will help students to find their way around the building, to learn new routines and to meet our high expectations. Be sure to ask your child to name some classmates, and to tell you about the rules they are creating in their classrooms. Students in first and second grade can tell you all about how the cafeteria works, for example. They did a fine job practicing with me today.

Please remember these first few days are tiring. Please help your child by observing regular bed times and remembering to pack snacks and/or lunches together. The warm weather makes water bottles a nice treat.

Here are a few important reminders about school routines:

## **Arrival at School**

- School starts promptly at 9:00. Students arrive between 8:30-8:55. Students may arrive at school no earlier than 8:30 am.

- We met students and families on the playground this morning because it was the first day, but we do ask that students develop independent habits early on, from the second day. Unless your child takes the bus, please drop off your child at the front entrance tomorrow. We will have lots of adults on hand to help.

## **General Information**

At the bottom of this notice you will find detailed information about student drop-off and pick-up at Coolidge School. These routines were developed in conjunction with the Town officials and the Shrewsbury Police Department and refined most recently to provide a safe, efficient dismissal for our 400 students – your cooperation with them helps keep our students safe.

### **Lunch**

School lunch costs \$3.00 and includes fruit, veggies, main meal, dessert, and a drink. Cookies and bottled water can be purchased for an additional \$.60. Students may also bring their lunch from home.

### **No School ~ Friday, August 29th**

Teachers will be participating in a full day of professional development focused on math curriculum and instruction. Students do not have school on this day.

### **Updating Demographics in PowerSchool**

Please be sure that you have updated your demographic information, as well as home & cell phone numbers and email addresses online on the PowerSchool Parent Portal. To log in to your Parent Portal account, go to <https://ps.shrewsbury.k12.ma.us> <<https://ps.shrewsbury.k12.ma.us/public/home.html>> . You will also be prompted to read the Elementary Student Handbook and acknowledge that you have read and understand the information in the handbook.

**The Elementary Lunch Menu and Directions for purchasing pre-paid lunch tickets** can be found at any time at:

<http://schools.shrewsbury-ma.gov/departments/division.php?fDD=20-17>  
<<http://schools.shrewsbury-ma.gov/departments/division.php?fDD=20-17>>

Thanks for all your support.

Sincerely,

*Amy*

### **Important Upcoming Dates:**

<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>August 27, First Day of School-Kindergarten</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>August 29, Teacher Professional Development Day-No School</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>September 1, Labor Day – No School</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>September 17, School Pictures</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>September 23, Curriculum Night, Grades 3 and 4, 6:30-7:30 pm</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>September 30, Curriculum Night, Kindergarten, Grades 1 &amp; 2, 6:30</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>October 7, Early Release Day, 12:15 pm dismissal for students</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>October 9, Math Meeting for Parents with Dr. Richard Bisk</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>October 13, No School – Columbus Day</b>

The full district school calendar is available on the district homepage at:

<http://schools.shrewsbury-ma.gov/>

### **DRIVING STUDENTS TO AND FROM COOLIDGE SCHOOL**

Managing the arrival and dismissal of 400 young students can be a significant challenge! **These procedures have been reviewed with and developed in consultation with the Shrewsbury Police Department in order to have the safest possible routines.** Please review and follow the procedures below to help us manage this *safely*.

#### **MORNING ARRIVAL**

All students arriving at Coolidge should come in one of three ways:

1. On the bus
2. As a walker
3. By using the drop-off procedure described below

**It would be FANTASTIC if we increased the number of students that walk to school. Please seriously consider becoming a walking family. Mr. Horton, our crossing guard is on hand to help every morning and afternoon.**

#### **AFTERNOON DISMISSAL**

Students leaving in the afternoon must also be dismissed in one of three ways:

1. On the bus
2. As a walker – students exit out the rear door
3. By using the pick-up procedure (see map below)

➤ **Waiting for and picking up students in the main lobby is not permitted.** This creates a significant safety concern for us as far as knowing with confidence that all students are dismissed properly, especially because the office is very busy near dismissal time. It is also an issue of fairness towards all families – we cannot have some wait in the pickup line while others use a quicker method.

➤ **We also ask parents not to dismiss students as walkers and pick them up by car away from school grounds.** Again, the safety issue is paramount.

For **parent pick-up** in the afternoons, auto traffic should circle through the playground and wait at the back door until dismissal begins to move toward to the front. **While waiting, please be respectful of neighborhood driveways and do not block them; please do not turn around in neighborhood driveways.** After pick-up, cars must leave via May Street. Since this is the same way our busses exit, it's important that drivers take direction from staff about when to turn. **No one should ever park in this area.**

**Please do have your ID ready.** Staff will check to make sure that only parents and/or designees are picking up each child. Thanks for your patience as we welcome new families to Coolidge and learn new names.

**While we understand that waiting in line can be frustrating for those of us in a hurry, it is unfair to allow a few to disregard this policy for convenience's sake, as one family's time is no more or less valuable than another's.** Dismissing students through the office in order to avoid waiting in line violates our school community's value of "working together" and teaches children that following procedures is for others. **We ask that you remain patient and take it slow in order to make arrival and dismissal as safe as possible for everyone.**

We sincerely thank you for your cooperation in helping to ensure a safe and smooth dismissal.